

Resources for Building Evidence of Effectiveness

CNCS provide a wealth of resources helpful to strong program management. Here's a summary of the resources available for building evaluation capacity and program evidence through research and evaluation.

CNCS Knowledge Network Resources

Evaluation Planning (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/planning-evaluation#How to write evaluation plan>)

- *Laying the Groundwork Before Your First Evaluation*: This presentation covers five foundational activities that programs should undertake during their first grant cycle so that they are ready to do an evaluation when they receive re-compete funding for a second grant cycle. *Logic Models*: This course introduces the key components of a logic model and discusses how logic models can be used to support daily program operations and evaluation planning.
- *Developing the Right Research Questions*: This presentation describes the importance of research questions in overall program evaluation design, identifies the four basic steps for developing research questions, and demonstrates how to write strong research questions for different types of evaluation designs (i.e., process evaluation and outcome evaluation).
- *Budgeting for Evaluation*: This course discusses the key components of an evaluation budget and approaches for creating an evaluation budget.
- *Logic Models*: This course introduces the key components of a logic model and discusses how logic models can be used to support daily program operations and evaluation planning.
- *Overview of Evaluation Design*: This course explains different types of evaluation designs, the differences between them, the key elements of each, as well as considerations in selecting a design for your AmeriCorps program evaluation.
- *How to Write an Evaluation Plan*: This course explains the purpose of an evaluation plan and outlines the key sections of the plan and what should be included in each section.

Implementing an Evaluation (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/implementing-evaluation>)

- *Basic Steps in Conducting an Evaluation*: This course describes the basic steps for conducting an evaluation including planning, collecting and analyzing data, and communicating and applying findings.
- *Data Collection*: This course will address key questions to consider prior to selecting a data collection method; the importance of selecting appropriate methods; the advantages and disadvantages of a variety of methods; and the difference between quantitative and qualitative methods and their roles in process and outcome evaluations.
- *Managing an External Evaluation*: This presentation describes how to manage an external evaluation and is intended for grantees that are considering or will be undertaking an external evaluation of their program.

Analysis and Reporting Evaluation Results (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/analysis-and-reporting-evaluation-results>)

- *Reporting and Using Evaluation Results*: This course will help AmeriCorps State and National programs understand the importance of communicating and disseminating evaluation results to stakeholders; write an evaluation report and become familiar with other key reporting tools; and determine meaningful programmatic changes based on evaluation findings and learn how to implement them.

Using Evaluation Results for Action and Improvement (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/using-evaluation-results-action-and-improvement>)

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- *Developing a Long-Term Research Agenda*: This course will help participants recognize the importance of building a long-term research agenda; identify the various stages in building evidence of a program's effectiveness; and understand the key questions to consider prior to developing a long-term research agenda.

Evidence Exchange—this is a digital repository of research, evaluation reports, and data focusing on national service, social innovation, civic engagement, and volunteering.
<http://www.nationalservice.gov/impact-our-nation/evidence-exchange>

Pacific Regional National Service Training Conferences (Link to be provided when available)

- *Building the Culture and Capacity for Meaningful Evaluation (Jessamyn Luiz, Dialogues in Action)*: This workshop provides participants with tools and techniques to help them build a culture that embraces evaluation and set their programs on a path of continuous improvement.
- *The Art & Practice of Evaluation (Steve Patty, Principal Consultant, Dialogues in Action)*: focuses on building participants' skills to design simple, elegant and meaningful evaluation of their program's impact, rather than just outputs.
- *Beyond Compliance: Useful Evaluation (Nicole Dunn, VP of Strategy and Research; Thomas P. Miller and Associates)*—Understand the benefits, beyond compliance, of a utilization-focused evaluation approach; Apply the utilization-focused planning framework to set up a successful, useful evaluation.